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C O N F I D E N T I A L LJUBLJANA 000120

SIPDIS

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TAGS: PREL NATO MOPS MARR AF SI

SUBJECT: SLOVENIA: AFGHANISTAN CONTRIBUTIONS WAITING ON  
TOP-LEVEL POLITICAL DECISION, LIKELY IN MAY

REF: A. STATE 31102

1B. LJUBLJANA 93

1C. LJUBLJANA 114

Classified By: CDA Brad Freden, reasons 1.4(b,d)

11. (C) Officials from the ministries of Defense (MOD), Interior (MOI), and Foreign Affairs (MFA) told CDA in separate meetings that Slovenia will contribute equipment to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), but decisions on police mentoring teams (PMT) and an operational liaison and mentoring team (OMLT) will be made by the Prime Minister and his cabinet following the completion of a strategic review of Slovenia's military deployments abroad (ref A, B). Interior Minister Kresal told us she expects a government decision "in May." We believe the OMLT will be the hardest sell, and we will therefore focus our attention on convincing the political leadership to field one, perhaps in cooperation with Slovenia's State Partner, the Colorado National Guard. Slovenia will contribute an additional 15 troops for Afghan election security, with an unspecified arrival date and likely October departure. Uros Krek, State Secretary for the Ministry of Defense, told CDA on April 15 that the possibility of a Slovene-led OMLT has been discussed during the ongoing strategic review, but no decision has been made. Krek stressed, however, that regarding equipment, it was not a question of whether, but what equipment Slovenia would contribute. He said the MOD was pushing the MFA to establish a diplomatic presence in Kabul to coordinate Slovenia's various contributions (military, civilian, and NGO), but he implied that the MFA was dragging its feet.

12. (C) Interior Minister Katarina Kresal told CDA on April 20 that she has already sent a proposal on a police mentoring team to the MOD, saying that the police are ready to participate (ref C). Kresal said she expected the government to make its decision on policy toward Afghanistan in May. She also mentioned an Austrian proposal to train Afghan police in a third country, an idea also brought up by Igor Jukic, director of the MFA's security policy division, in an April 23 meeting. We pushed back, saying that in-country training was likely to be more effective. Jukic also said he was aware of a proposal to send 2 police training experts as part of EUPOL, but did not have further details.

Comment

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13. (C) The GoS is taking a deliberative approach toward Afghanistan, but it is clear to us that Defense Minister Ljubica Jelusic is the driving force behind greater Slovenian engagement in Afghanistan, both civilian and militar. It also seems clear that the OMLT is going beour hardest sell. All the ministries have made poitive noises about police training and equipmentdonations, but only the PM will be able to make he decision on an OMLT. Jelusic needs the goverment's endorsement before she can engage in evententative discussions regarding the details of a Slvenian OMLT. If Kresal is right, the governmentwill take that decision sometime in May. This mans that we will have to continue to engage at the political level in the coming weeks if we are to convince Slovenia to field an OMLT. The decision will likely require parliamentary approval as well, so we are looking at ways to support the government through our public diplomacy.

FREDEN